MUSEUM BEGINNINGS IN THE NATIONAL PARKS

Park museums did not grow from a single root, nor did any central authority decree their initial establishment. The first ones developed independently, created by local initiative to meet perceived needs. They could have received little stimulus through the rudimentary channels of communication that existed among the parks before creation of the National Park Service in 1916.

Early park employees had two primary duties that have remained fundamental: protecting park resources and serving park visitors. Many visitors were eager to learn and asked questions, often ones lacking ready answers. Staff members responded to this lively interest as best they could. Some of them did so in part by collecting, identifying, labeling, and exhibiting pertinent specimens. The people who undertook these curatorial tasks in addition to their regular duties carried on to some extent—perhaps with little intention—the behind-the-scenes museum functions of recording and preserving park resources. It soon became apparent that the more visitors understood about these resources, the more interested they were in protecting them. This observation added momentum to museum development in the parks.

Perhaps none of those who started the first park museums had worked in museums previously. But museums were part of the intellectual climate in which they lived. During the first quarter of the twentieth century museum scientists visited most of the national parks and many of the national monuments to collect specimens and data. Park workers were influenced both by these contacts and by public interest in what museums were doing.

Park museums did not sprout up in a cultural vacuum. They were engendered by a variety of outside factors, which led to three distinct lines of progression. The first to be considered took place in natural resource parks.

Natural Parks

On September 10, 1904, Major John Bigelow, Jr., of the 9th U.S. Cavalry, acting superintendent of Yosemite National Park, issued his General Orders No. 46 establishing an arboretum in the park.[1] An arboretum is a form of museum, making this among the first museums in any national park. Setting aside between 75 and one hundred acres near the Wawona Hotel, Bigelow detailed the detachment surgeon, Lieutenant Henry F. Pipes, to lay out trails, label samples of the various species of trees and flowers with their common and scientific names, transplant to the arboretum specimens of

other interesting plants found in the park, and protect the area from misuse. He also instructed civilian rangers to collect plants from elsewhere in the park and to look after the arboretum during the winter while the troops were gone.

Pipes cleared the paths, equipped them with signposts and benches, and labeled 36 species of plants on one-inch planks painted khaki and nailed to trees or posts. Time permitted moving in only one transplant. When the arboretum elicited an inquiry from the Department of the Interior, Bigelow justified it by stating that an important purpose of the park was "to provide a great museum of nature for the public free of cost." This concept of the park itself as a museum is a significant and recurring one. He went on to express his hope that the arboretum would "some day be supplemented by a building serving the purpose of a museum and library."[2]

Bigelow retired from the Army at the end of the 1904 season. He commended the arboretum to his successor, Captain Harry C. Benson of the 4th Cavalry, but circumstances prevented its continued development. In 1905-06 a boundary change removed the acreage containing the arboretum from the park and California retroceded Yosemite Valley to the federal government, making it the park's centerpiece. The arboretum was almost completely forgotten. After 47 years of total neglect a park ranger retraced the overgrown paths and located eight of the original labels still in place and faintly legible.[3]

Museum development in Yosemite did not wait that long to resume. In 1914 the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, founded in 1908 at the University of California in Berkeley, began a study of the mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians of the Yosemite region. Field work for the study continued until August 1920 with one or more expeditions each year except in wartime. Museum staff spent 957 man-days collecting 2,001 pages of field notes and 4,354 specimens, preserving both in the museum as an invaluable record of park resources. Yosemite's staff not only helped with logistics but added useful observations and specimens.[4]

Joseph Grinnell, director of the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology and leader of the Yosemite study, was a museologist and teacher as well as zoologist.[5] He and his field workers significantly increased local awareness of museum policies, practices, and opportunities. Stephen T. Mather, busy with the creation of a national park service, became so interested that he contributed personally toward the costs of field studies.[6] Grinnell's influence fostered the creation of a museum of sorts in the park in 1915. A number of mounted birds and mammals, and apparently some pressed plants accompanied by watercolor sketches, were exhibited in the crowded headquarters building, which also contained a newly established information bureau. Because Grinnell taught that "people instinctively want to know the names of things," each specimen probably had its label.[7]

Park ranger Forest S. Townsley contributed at least some of the mounted animals. After previous service in Platt National Park, he joined the small ranger staff at Yosemite in 1913, became chief ranger in 1916, and held this position until his death in 1943. Taxidermy was his hobby. He probably taught himself with the aid of one or more of the excellent handbooks by museum taxidermists that had sold widely since the 1890s. No doubt his contacts with Grinnell and other field workers from the Museum of Vertebrate Zoology helped to intensify his interest and refine his technique.

If Townsley had a key part in starting the little museum at headquarters, he received reinforcement with the appointment of Ansel F. Hall as information ranger in 1919.[8] Conditions then favored museum growth. The National Park Service had begun to function under a policy letter Secretary of the Interior Franklin K. Lane sent Director Mather on May 13, 1918. "The educational, as well as the recreational, use of the national parks should be encouraged in every practicable way. . . ," it stated in part. "Museums containing specimens of wild flowers, shrubs, and trees and mounted animals, birds, and fish native to the parks, and other exhibits of this character, will be established as authorized."[9] This basic statement also contained the germ of future accession policies limiting the scope of park museum collections.

Mather himself was seizing upon curatorial measures in his vigorous campaign to build public support for the national parks. As a feature of the Fourth National Park Conference in January 1917 he arranged for a special exhibition at the Smithsonian's National Museum. Forty-five paintings of park scenes by such artists as Bierstadt, Leigh, Moran, Rungius, and Twachtman were hung for the opening reception. Most remained on public display until after President Woodrow Wilson's second inauguration in March. During the same fiscal year Mather launched an experimental traveling exhibition intended for display in libraries. It consisted of 24 framed photographs of park scenery packed in two reusable shipping boxes. Its continuing popularity led the director to request funds to produce and circulate additional sets.[10]

Mather's early annual reports contained enthusiastic references to museum developments in the parks. For Yosemite he proposed to include ample museum space in the new administration building he was asking Congress to finance. His 1919 report announced establishment of a National Parks Educational Committee chaired by the secretary of the Smithsonian Institution. Its objectives included active promotion of the idea that the national parks are "museums of Nature in her supreme manifestations," an echo of Major Bigelow's concept. "One of the most important matters to receive earnest consideration is the early establishment of adequate museums in every one of our parks in which comprehensive exhibits of the

flora and fauna, and perhaps the minerals of the region, can be placed," Mather declared in his 1920 report.[11]

Undergirding such internal factors favorable to park museum development was an external one. The American public was on the verge of a decade of heightened interest in natural history. The nature study movement, which had been growing since the 1890s, was approaching its harvest time. Excitement over the evolution controversy was also building toward a climax. Many of the visitors who stopped at the Yosemite information bureau in 1919 came with curiosity about the plants, animals, and geologic history of the park already aroused.[12]

Ansel Hall probably spent most of his first summer at Yosemite on duty in the information bureau. If so, he helped register 18,000 campers and answer questions from an estimated ninety percent of other park visitors. He was well placed to observe their interests and their reactions to the natural history specimens on exhibit. The next summer, the new nature guide service under Harold C. Bryant and Loye H. Miller generated more visitor questions about natural history. Enid Michael, wife of the Yosemite postmaster and an able botanist, maintained a large display of cut wild flowers at the entrance to headquarters. "So great was the interest in the flower show started last year that it was continued throughout the winter," the 1921 Park Service report stated. "Many have spent hours, notebook in hand, studying the exhibits."[13]

In 1920 Yosemite could foresee more space for its cramped museum. It would not have to wait on the long chance that Congress might appropriate the funds requested for a new headquarters building big enough to contain the exhibits. Director Mather had decided to have built at his own expense a rangers' clubhouse, which would be completed that fall. Then the bachelor rangers, presumably including Hall, could leave the old structure that served as their quarters and mess. It had been built about 1899 by Chris Jorgensen, a successful California artist, as a rustic home and studio. With moderate alteration the well-sited building could house the museum.

That September Superintendent Washington B. Lewis authorized Hall to proceed with preparations. The assignment did not include an appreciable budget, and Hall had to beg, borrow, and scrounge. The exhibit cases were of necessity homemade. He turned unneeded doors into exhibit tables and secured the donation of slabs from a lumber company operating near the park. Meanwhile he launched an aggressive acquisition program, seeking out appropriate specimens as gifts and loans. This was so successful that he could value the collection at more than $30,000 by the time the museum opened on June 17, 1922. It occupied six rooms designated respectively for history, ethnology, geology, natural history, botany, and trees of the region. By the end of the summer it had attracted more than 33,000

visitors. "Although quarters available are wholly inadequate, the museum has developed into a very creditable one," the superintendent reported.[14]

What Hall knew about curatorial work in 1920 had not come from formal museum training. Grinnell and his field staff had doubtless familiarized him with their techniques and standards in the preparation and recording of scientific study specimens. The Museum of Vertebrate Zoology, however, had little interest in exhibition. Harold Bryant and others of the nature guide project also knew how to collect, prepare, and record natural history specimens, but their primary interests lay in person-to-person educational activities. The character of the museum Hall created can be judged from contemporary photographs of the exhibit rooms and published items in *Yosemite Nature Notes,* an initially mimeographed periodical the park first issued in 1922 with Hall as editor.[15]

These sources reveal an understandably amateurish installation. The photographs show a plethora of objects in and atop cases, on and under open tables, along shelves and window sills, and hung on the walls. The display methods appear little influenced by concern for the preservation of the specimens, their didactic use, or their aesthetic effect. The objects were set out primarily to be looked at by visitors. Labeling appears minimal,

Yosemite National Park Museum, 1922-25. One of the exhibit rooms in the former Chris Jorgensen studio.

although some explanatory panels, maps, and pictures can be seen. The six room designations imply a systematic arrangement, but the photos indicate some mingling of subject matter. Evidently some of the exhibits were more fully developed. *Nature Notes* referred to a comparative display of Indian cradle baskets and another that showed obsidian arrow points along with pictures explaining how they were made. The arrow point display related to piles of obsidian chips visitors were likely to discover in the park, a studied effort to tie museum exhibits to field features.

From *Nature Notes,* it is also clear that the museum was not static. The accessions program was in full swing and what came in usually went on display. An injured pygmy owl picked up in the park was soon a mounted specimen on view. One visitor donated a prize trout he had just caught. Another promptly gave a specimen jar in which to display it. The museum had been open less than two months before visitors were asked to bring in live field mice and gophers to feed more than three dozen snakes of twelve species. Chief Ranger Townsley had even concocted a museum joke, the tanned skin of a feral house cat dyed black, that had visitors guessing. Evidently the new museum was active and popular.

The museum's unprofessional aspects, hardly abreast of the best current practice, engendered some curatorial problems for the future. One of the first large accessions, the Mitchell collection of Indian baskets, presented a novice curator with several potentially dangerous pitfalls. The material culture of the Indians who had inhabited Yosemite constituted a legitimate secondary subject for the museum. But the baskets ranged considerably beyond the park, and the Mitchells had a case built "to exhibit the entire collection."[16] If this was a condition of the gift, it set a precedent that hampered later curators in managing the Yosemite collections properly. The owners had been offered $400 for one particularly rare basket sought by the Smithsonian Institution. This created a circumstance likely to fan the natural acquisitiveness of a curator and color his judgment. An experienced curator would have negotiated with the Mitchells for a selective and unrestricted gift of the baskets clearly pertinent to Yosemite.

The Mitchell donation initiated a flow of Indian baskets that eventually became a burden to the museum. Within a year Chris Jorgensen gave many, most of Yosemite origin, from his large collection. The following year the park accepted from a woman in Kansas more than six hundred Indian artifacts, including Iroquois, Haida, Apache, and Pomo baskets.[17] In time the Yosemite Museum had many more Indian baskets than it could properly care for or use.

Ethnology was not the only secondary subject area into which the new park museum plunged. It also had a history room. A few aspects of Yosemite history, particularly those related to conservation and development of national parks, have truly national significance. But most of what

had happened in the Yosemite region since white men first penetrated the valley had little influence beyond that typical of local history anywhere. Although park visitors might find stories of Yosemite's past interesting, nostalgic, or even exciting, could they warrant the expenditure of time and money on the federal level implicit in extensive museum treatment?

Ansel Hall became fascinated with this history and began collecting its relics avidly. In the *Sierra Club Bulletin* he recounted how "a great number of mementos of the early days [had] found their way back to Yosemite, among them two old stagecoaches; a number of exceedingly interesting hotel registers; numerous souvenirs of . . . pioneers; relics of the golden days of '49; and arms and accouterments of the early days of Spanish California."[18] The results not only stocked a history room when the museum opened but contributed to influential trends that affected the Yosemite museum program and museum developments in other parks for many years. Perhaps Director Mather encouraged Hall in this direction, for in 1921 Mather received very favorably a suggestion for history exhibits at Yellowstone from the popular writer Emerson Hough.[19]

With all the attention Hall gave to history and ethnology he did not neglect natural history. For the museum's focal point he personally constructed a large relief model of Yosemite Valley, ten feet long with a scale of nine inches to a mile. He could not have chosen any exhibit closer to the basic significance of the park—the great glacial valley and the geologic story of its formation. It took him most of two winters to build using the facilities of the University of California's Forestry Division, where he had majored. It was molded and cast in time for the museum opening. He painted in the surface details with visitors watching. After that he used the model to illustrate daily museum talks on how geologic forces had created the spectacular landscape visitors came to see.

Several factors undoubtedly influenced Hall to select this project. Superintendent Lewis, much interested in the museum, was himself a topographer with wide field experience. In 1907 the U.S. Geological Survey had published a contour map of Yosemite Valley that provided data essential to the task. Francois E. Matthes, a USGS geologist who had done the topography for the map, had been engaged since 1913 in an intensive study of the park's geologic history. He had talked to park visitors on his research in the 1919 LeConte Memorial Lectures, and his conclusions, settling a long scientific debate, would soon be in print. Topographic models were in vogue. The new museum of the Buffalo Society of Natural Sciences opened in October 1920 with a model of its local area as a centerpiece. Yellowstone National Park received a relief map of the park as a welcome gift in 1921.[20]

Hall's energetic prosecution of his museum assignment led to promotion. He became Yosemite's first park naturalist on July 1, 1921. The new

title evidently did not carry with it an immediate workload of interpretation or supervision, for he soon left the park for a mountaineering expedition with his friend Francis P. Farquhar of the Sierra Club. On August 26 the two men became the first to reach the summit of the Middle Palisade in the Kings River region. Late the next day they came upon and camped with Chauncey J. Hamlin and his party, who were working their way along an unfinished portion of the John Muir Trail. The party had just built a section of the trail over Mather Pass, which they had named in honor of the director of the National Park Service.[21] This apparently chance meeting forged one link in a chain of circumstances that set park museums on the road to professionalism, as will be recounted in the next chapter.

At the close of the 1921 season Harold Bryant of the California Fish and Game Commission, on loan to the park to conduct the nature guide project for the second summer, formally recommended that the park assume full responsibility for the nature guide service and place a permanent staff member in charge.[22] He also recommended that someone be appointed to oversee similar work on a Service-wide basis. In keeping with Bryant's first suggestion, Hall provided continuity for the nature guide program leading up to the 1922 season and probably had some supervisory role that summer. His museum responsibilities must have received priority, however. The shortcomings of the old Jorgensen studio led him to begin soliciting funds for a new, fireproof structure. He persuaded Herbert Maier, a young architect trained at the University of California, to make and donate sketches to show what he had in mind. He had collected more than $7,000 in cash and pledges for the new museum building by the summer of 1923, when he learned that he would have an opportunity to go abroad for a year. To safeguard the money he obtained approval to set up the Yosemite Museum Association, the prototype for the cooperating associations now active in many parks.[23]

That August Hall was promoted again, to the new position of chief naturalist for the National Park Service. This action followed Bryant's second suggestion but did not result in a strong central supervision of naturalist work for some years. Other priorities intervened. The circumstances growing out of Chauncey Hamlin's meeting with Hall on the John Muir Trail had not yet run their course.

The final step in the beginnings of the Yosemite Museum also came in the summer of 1923. On June 10 Hall hired as a temporary assistant a biology teacher from the Reno, Nevada, High School. Ranger-naturalist Carl P. Russell quickly demonstrated his interest and aptitude in developing and managing the museum. A few months later, when Hall left for Europe, Russell obtained a leave of absence from the high school and assumed the duties of park naturalist. With Hall's promotion out of the staff, Russell succeeded to the permanent park naturalist post and to responsibility for the

museum. This marked a turning point in the history of curatorship in the Service. It formed another important link coming out of the Hamlin encounter.[24]

The development of the Yosemite Museum up to this point exemplifies what was going on in other natural parks. Similar factors led to curatorial activity. Within the same general time frame several parks reached the information bureau-with-exhibits stage and were calling for adequate museum buildings. A few additional examples will illustrate variations within the pattern.

In Sequoia Superintendent Walter Fry had begun collecting museum specimens at least by 1917. A forest fire that August burned down his residence/headquarters near Three Rivers. The loss included "over 4000 specimens of the flora of the Sequoia and General Grant National Parks that had been collected and prepared for use in an exhibit of the flora of the parks." At the end of the 1920 season Fry's successor, John R. White, reported: "The exhibit of wild flowers maintained by Mrs. Magly, assisted by other ladies, in the entrance to the superintendent's office was much admired and was of educational value both from botanical and administrative standpoints. . . . A similar exhibit of the cones and branches of sequoias, firs, pines, and other trees, shrubs, and flowers was of equal value. These exhibits form the nucleus of the Park Museum, to be established when appropriation is available for the necessary building."[25]

Fry, now U.S. commissioner for Sequoia, inaugurated a free nature guide service at Giant Forest under official sponsorship in 1922. That summer Ansel Hall donated a hundred Riker mounts and $10 for the wildflower exhibit. These made "a handsome addition to the Administration Building" but threatened to outgrow the available space.[26] The next summer the nature guide service staged a play to raise money for the museum. Director Mather attended the performance, which cleared $120. A Giant Forest Museum Association was organized to manage the funds. In 1924 the nature guides operated out of a little museum installed in a tent. The following year the museum was back in the administration building, which it eventually took over and occupied until 1966.

Early museum development in Yellowstone National Park differed in one respect from the previous example. The impetus came initially and persistently from outside the park staff. Milton P. Skinner was the prime instigator. While an undergraduate he spent the summer of 1898 at Old Faithful. The untrained guide hired by the hotel to explain the geysers seemed to him quite inadequate. Skinner occasionally substituted for this guide and discovered that there was no place in the park to obtain reliable information on the phenomena.

Skinner became a devoted student of Yellowstone's natural history. Returning to the park year after year, he worked as a nature guide and

lecturer for the hotels and later as a Corps of Engineers overseer on road construction projects. At some point he began active agitation "for an official government service including guiding, lecturing, information bureaus and museum."[27] Apparently the first hopeful reaction came about 1910. Yellowstone's acting superintendent at that time was Major Harry Benson, the same officer who had inherited Major Bigelow's arboretum and proposal for a museum at Yosemite in 1905. No direct link is documented, but Skinner learned that the park was considering the establishment of a museum at Mammoth Hot Springs and hoped to get $10,000 for a building. He redoubled his efforts at the park and in the winter of 1913-14 took his plea to the secretary of the interior.

Skinner's lobbying in Washington failed in its immediate purpose, but two actions followed. He was asked to write the park's first circular of information for visitors. Along with the rules and regulations it contained his checklist of Yellowstone birds. And the general superintendent and landscape engineer of the national parks called in 1915 for a study of surplus buildings at Fort Yellowstone with the intention of converting a suitable one into a park museum.[28] The recommendation bore fruit as soon as Horace M. Albright became superintendent of the park.

Superintendent Albright, who was Director Mather's close associate and shared his interest in the incipient park museums, promptly made Skinner a park ranger with the sole duty of developing an educational service for Yellowstone visitors. Appointed in October 1919, Skinner advanced to the prototype position of park naturalist in the spring of 1920. During his brief tenure the park adapted one of the Fort Yellowstone buildings as a base for the new educational program. This fine stone structure, formerly the bachelor officers' quarters, remained the central museum for the park thereafter and in 1979 was rededicated as the Horace M. Albright Visitor Center. For the 1920 season the park naturalist operated an information bureau in a small office, probably while the newly assigned building was being made ready. In 1921 the information bureau occupied the front room of the old bachelor officers' quarters and Skinner began developing a park museum in the room behind for the 1922 season. By the time he left in September 1922, the exhibits included more than 130 geological and paleontological specimens, more than eighty botanical specimens, and a few zoological items, all labeled with exceptional care from the standpoint of visitor needs.[29]

The homemade museum continued to grow after Skinner's resignation. In 1923 park rangers contributed three mounted mammals, someone else gave a mounted whooping crane, and additional cases were built. The next permanent park naturalist for Yellowstone, Edmund J. Sawyer, served from 1924 to 1928. Described as an artist-ornithologist, he evidently did some preparation work on the museum exhibits but concentrated his efforts

elsewhere. In 1925 Albright took the unusual step of appointing one of the park concessioners, Jack E. Haynes, as acting director of the museum. Haynes served the museum well, assuring its continued development and even constructing a working model of a geyser for the Old Faithful ranger station.[30] By the time his appointment ended in 1929 the team that had professionalized the museum program at Yosemite was at work in Yellowstone.

To cite a few other cases, Mount Rainier operated an information bureau in the superintendent's office at Longmire beginning in 1918 "for the purpose of informing visitors in regard to the flowers, trees, animals, and points of interest in the park." Professor J. B. Flett, the park ranger in charge, probably had at least a few natural history specimens on display. When a new administration building was complete in 1928, the old one became the park museum. This building, still containing exhibits dating from the 1920s, now constitutes a "museum of a museum." In 1918 Rocky Mountain National Park reported that a collection of plants would "be on file in the park office for reference and use by the public." Grand Canyon's superintendent stated in 1922 that collections of wildflowers and minerals from the park and photographs from other national parks were being assembled for exhibition in the information room.[31] The natural parks had discovered by then that exhibiting specimens gave them a powerful medium for serving the educational objectives the National Park Service was beginning to formulate.

Archeological Parks

Elements of crisis and conflict underlay the beginnings of park museums at archeological sites. As archeology matured into a science during the 19th century, it opened new vistas into the past. These glimpses of prehistory aroused widespread public interest, making ancient artifacts increasingly desirable acquisitions for collectors and museums. At the same time archeologists learned from experience how much information and insight they could gain by using continually refined, painstaking techniques of excavation and artifact research. Conversely, this emphasized how much potential knowledge was destroyed when amateurs vandalized sites in search of marketable relics.

During the 1880s public interest and professional concern began to focus on the spectacular Indian ruins of the Southwest. The growing population of this region and its increasing accessibility made the sites more and more vulnerable. The activities of the Wetherill brothers in mining the Mesa Verde cliff dwellings and selling their finds (1887-91) underlined a critical situation.[32]

Pressure grew to protect the prehistoric structures. In January 1889 several prominent citizens of Massachusetts including Governor Oliver Ames, John Fiske, Edward Everett Hale, William T. Harris, Mary Hemenway, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Mrs. Henry Cabot Lodge, Francis Parkman, and John Greenleaf Whittier appealed to Congress to protect the Casa Grande ruin in Arizona. It took Congress just over a month to appropriate $200 for repair and protection of the ruin and to authorize the President to reserve from settlement and sale the land on which it was situated.[33]

After Cosmos Mindeleff of the Geological Survey carried out initial repairs to Casa Grande in 1890-91, the General Land Office effected the reservation of the tract in 1892. When this action failed to provide adequate protection, the GLO appointed a resident custodian. Frank Pinkley, a 20-year-old Missourian whose uncle was U.S. land commissioner in Phoenix, entered on duty in December 1901. Until 1910, when he built an adobe house at the site, he lived in a tent. He guarded the ruin from molestation, greeted the occasional sightseeing travelers, and gave each party a conducted tour. From the start he collected and carefully saved whatever artifacts he found, but evidently he refrained from destructive pot hunting. When the GLO erected a corrugated iron roof over Casa Grande in 1903, the rooms inside the tower provided shelter for him to display these artifacts and use them in his explanations to visitors. So Casa Grande had an embryonic museum at least by 1905.[34]

Beginning in 1906 the Interior Department funded two seasons of archeological field work at the site. By arrangement with the Smithsonian Institution, J. Walter Fewkes of the Bureau of American Ethnology spent the winters of 1906-07 and 1907-08 excavating and making minor repairs. The first season's work revealed "a ground plan of 43 rooms surrounded by a court yard wall, the whole divided into several courts and plazas . . . [where] we had before only a ground plan of five rooms with no courts, plazas, or surrounding walls . . . ." Pinkley's delight at this success was tempered when Fewkes took the recovered artifacts back to Washington for the National Museum. He advocated keeping them where they had been found as a more effective way of disseminating the knowledge gained and promoting public interest in the site. He also recommended an appropriation of about $2,000 to build a museum at Casa Grande to house the finds of future excavations.[35] The Smithsonian replied by citing the law that "All collections of rocks, minerals, soils, fossils, and objects of natural history, archaeology, and ethnology made by … parties for the Government of the United States . . . shall be deposited in the National Museum." It did agree that a selection of Casa Grande artifacts "suitable for the instruction of visitors" might be made available if a proper place was provided.[36]

Fewkes' second season made equally impressive discoveries. Pinkley's annual report renewed his arguments for keeping the specimens at the site and his request for funds to build a museum. "This might be done under the present law by making it a branch of the National Museum," he suggested. His single-handed attempt to change policy failed, perhaps in part because it encountered attitudes charged by the 1904-06 controversy between the Smithsonian and the supporters of the Antiquities Act of 1906.[37] He repeated his request for museum construction money in 1909 and 1915, each time without success.

Pinkley continued to guard and interpret Casa Grande until 1915, when he resigned to serve as an elected member of the Arizona legislature. He resumed his custodianship in April 1918, four months before Casa Grande became a national monument, at the invitation of Director Mather of the National Park Service. Almost at once he wrote Mather urging that plans be made to erect a museum building. That summer he added graphic items to the artifacts displayed in the covered ruin. Mather's interest became evident when he personally contributed $210 to buy an appropriate collection Mrs. Pinkley had inspected in a Long Beach gift shop. Finally in 1921 the Park Service allotted Casa Grande $1,200 for a museum and office building. After modifying the plans provided, Pinkley constructed it during 1922 using Indian labor. He described it as 50 by 22 feet with "an office, a file and storage room, a museum room, a library and map room, and a small rest room," all of adobe with cement floors. In the same breath he again recommended the return of duplicates from the Fewkes excavations, "for the increased interest they will give the visitor is beyond computation."[38] By 1923 the new museum was in operation and evidently occupied most of the building.

The Casa Grande museum suffered a setback in September 1925, when a cloudburst raised flood waters above the level of the cement floors. The lower layers of the adobe walls disintegrated and the building collapsed. Fortunately, the museum collection suffered little damage. A prompt release of emergency funds enabled Pinkley to rebuild the walls and roof. He had the museum operating again within four months.[39]

The collection continued to grow. The Southwest Museum left more than half the finds from its 1927-28 Casa Grande expedition at the site. The Los Angeles County Museum also was generous with the results of its 1930-31 investigations. By 1932, when Casa Grande began to receive attention from the small central staff of Park Service museum professionals, Pinkley had already spent a quarter of a century in the active development and use of his museum. Treating it consistently as a feature of the guided tour, he had kept the exhibits in continual flux, adding or subtracting and rearranging specimens to adjust to visitors' responses. This pattern of use contrasted with what was happening in other park museums intended as

open learning situations in which visitors could move freely, stay as long as they wished, and pursue their individual interests.[40] Not surprisingly, Pinkley clung to the methods he had proven in practice and strove to keep his independence in curatorial matters. Neither is it surprising that the small, isolated staffs of the southwestern national monuments to whom "Boss" Pinkley provided superb leadership for many years reflected his attitude; nor that in some instances the defense of a position shaded into hostility or even subterfuge.

Independence in the second example of museum development in archeological parks took a somewhat different form. Mesa Verde became a source for museum specimens soon after discovery of the ruins. Artifacts gathered by local cowboys in at least eight forays between 1887 and 1892 found their way to the Colorado State Historical Society, probably to the University of Pennsylvania Museum, and elsewhere. A large collection obtained in 1891 under the direction of a young Swedish scientist, Gustaf Nordenskiold, is still in the National Museum of Finland. An initial attempt to provide some protection involved temporary withdrawal of the land from sale, but this failed to prevent continued rifling of the ruins. Under pressure from a Colorado women's organization, Congress created Mesa Verde National Park in 1906. A series of politically appointed superintendents in the years before the National Park Service became operational also fell far short of assuring adequate protection. The last of these, Thomas Rickner, serving from December 1913 to May 1921, did oversee the establishment of a museum in the park, even if under questionable circumstances. Meanwhile a program of scientific archeology began at Mesa Verde.

When Walter Fewkes finished his work at Casa Grande in 1908, he was detailed to Mesa Verde on a similar assignment. Also on the ground was Edgar Lee Hewett, traveling fellow of the Archaeological Institute of America and recently appointed director of its new School of American Archaeology. Hewett had led a 1907 survey of the Mesa Verde ruins for the Interior Department that resulted in recommendations for their excavation and repair. He was equally familiar with Casa Grande and shared with Frank Pinkley the belief that artifacts were most useful when preserved in a museum at the site. His Mesa Verde report included this recommendation. Nevertheless, at the end of Fewkes' first season in the park the secretary of the Smithsonian requested and the secretary of the interior granted that the artifacts he recovered be "committed to the permanent custody of the United States National Museum . . . ."[41] Fewkes shipped off to Washington the 1908 finds he felt worth preserving, except for some heavy objects too expensive to transport. He continued this practice each season (except during the war years) until 1923, when the Park Service succeeded in terminating his work there. Agitation to keep these artifacts at Mesa Verde